

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) announced \$68,700 for Locke Fire District One through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP).

"This grant will help the Locke Fire District improve already heroic efforts to protect local homes and businesses," **said Arcuri, a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.** "I am glad to announce federal funding to help local first responders access new technology and upgrade equipment to best protect our communities. I know how important it is to fully fund first responders and ensure that New York gets the federal funds it needs and deserves. In Congress, I have joined colleagues on both sides of the aisle to increase funding for this grant program as well as help volunteer first responders with overdue tax relief."

Since taking office in January, Arcuri has announced over \$435,000 in Assistance to Firefighter Grants for emergency first responders in Cayuga County.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP) awards grants to firefighters, emergency response personnel and first responders to enhance response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of first responders and the citizens in their communities. AFGP grants provide resources for training, first responder health and safety programs, and response equipment and vehicles.

Since 2004, AFGP has provided a total of almost \$2.2 billion nationwide to first-responder organizations to purchase response equipment, personal protective equipment, and vehicles. In fiscal year 2007, AFGP will award approximately \$490 million directly to fire departments and EMS organizations to enhance their response capabilities.

Legislation cosponsored by Arcuri to provide tax assistance for volunteer emergency responders to help area fire departments retain and recruit volunteers was included in the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act (H.R. 3997) which passed the House of Representatives in November.

In March, Arcuri joined 100 Members of Congress in writing to the House Homeland Security

Appropriations Subcommittee requesting additional funding for the AFG Program as well as Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants that provide assistance to local departments to increase the number of first responders.

Last week, Arcuri voted for the Fiscal Year 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Act which included \$4.1 billion for homeland security and first responder grants.

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